

(Ireland.)

ANNUAL
REPORT

From the Commissioners of Education in Ireland,

For the Year ending the 25th March 1831.

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed, 24 June 1831.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY HENRY WILLIAM MARQUIS OF ANGLESEY,

Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter,

Lord Lieutenant General and General Governor of Ireland.

WE the Commissioners of Education in Ireland, constituted by an Act of Parliament, made in the fifty-third year of the reign of his late Majesty King GEORGE the Third, and in obedience thereto, respectfully submit to Your Excellency a general Report of our Proceedings from the 25th day of March 1830, to the 25th day of March 1831.

First, in relation to the Schools of Royal Foundation, we have to state that since our last general Report we have applied a portion of the surplus funds of the Royal School of Enniskillen for annual allowances to be made to a limited number of its Scholars to be from time to time, as vacancies shall occur, placed on the Foundation of that School, under the description of Foundation Scholars, each to be allowed the sum of £. 20 yearly during his continuance at the School, towards his maintenance, clothing, and education. And we have also appropriated for Exhibitions the annual sum of £. 120. to be distributed to three persons, to be from time to time selected for their learning and good conduct, from amongst such of the Foundation Scholars as shall be admitted to the University of Dublin under the rank of Fellow Commoners, subject however in both cases to certain conditions and regulations framed by the Commissioners to ensure the continuance of the diligence and propriety which must have led to the selection. We have also been enabled to continue for the past year the Annual Exhibitions mentioned in former Reports to a certain limited number of Students of merit, admitted from the Royal School of Armagh into the same University, and have a confident expectation that the funds of other Schools will at no very distant period enable the Commissioners to extend a similar encouragement to them.

Royal Schools.

ENNISKILLEN

ARMAGH.

We have the satisfaction to report to Your Excellency that the School House for the Royal School of Carysfort, intended for the instruction of persons of all religious persuasions in English and Mathematics, and in the rudiments of mercantile knowledge, is nearly completed, so that the Contractor became entitled to receive two thirds of the amount of his contract, being £. 334. 16., which the Commissioners have caused to be paid to him. The plan of this School House comprehends a comfortable residence for a Master, besides sufficient conveniencies

CARYSFORT

nencies for the reception and instruction of the Scholars; the Establishment will therefore assume a higher rank, and require the care and superintendence of a permanent Master, to whom the School Income will permit the Commissioners to allocate a salary not exceeding £92. 6. 2. a year. The appointment of a Master belongs to His Majesty as Patron of the School, and we submit to Your Excellency that when the buildings shall have been completed, it will be expedient that a Master shall be appointed by Your Excellency. The person now acting as such, and who has done so for the last fifteen years, has been paid a salary of £20. late currency, yearly; but has not had a regular appointment from the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

DUNGANNON.

We have further to report to Your Excellency, that the Reverend Mortimer O'Sullivan, who was appointed by his Grace the Lord Primate to manage and superintend the Royal School of Dungannon during the lunacy of the Reverend Doctor Dowdall, the Master, has resigned the conduct of that Establishment; and that the Reverend John Darley has been appointed by his Grace to succeed him as Master during such lunacy, under the same regulations in respect of salary; and he has accordingly been put into possession of the School Buildings by the Committee of the lunatic, pursuant to the order of the Right Honourable the Lord Chancellor, bearing date the 29th January last, having first entered into security to keep in repair the Master's, or private part of the Buildings, and without risk or expense to the Committee as to the maintenance, support or tuition of the Scholars; and we are happy to be able to report that under Mr. Darley this Establishment is likely to prove extremely efficient.

RAPHOE.

We have further to report to Your Excellency, that the extensive improvements noticed in our Report of last year as in progress at the School House of Raphoe have been finished, and that the full sum granted from the Consolidated Fund, by way of loan, has been advanced to the Contractor; and that certain additional works, urgently desired by the Master, the Reverend James Irwin, as essential to the comfort and maintenance of his School, and allowed by the Board to be executed on his consenting to a suspension of the payment of his salary until the cost thereof should be discharged out of the funds of the School, have been also completed: but we regret that the Commissioners have not been able to obtain from Mr. Irwin, who is tenant of the School Lands, a sum sufficient to discharge the full amount of the Builder's charge for such additional works; Mr. Irwin having represented to them that he has not been able to collect from the occupying tenants even a small portion of the rents due by them to him, by reason of their total insubordination, and violent and lawless conduct, as lately evinced on the occasion of an attempt made by him to distrain the goods of some of those tenants for non-payment of a part of the arrears.

Out of the funds of these Royal Schools there has been expended since our last Report a sum of £640. 17. on account of repairs and improvements on the several School Houses, and the Commissioners have made allowances to certain of the tenants of the estates of the Royal School of Cavan to enable them to improve their holdings.

Private Schools.

MIDDLETON.

We beg leave in the next place to report on such matters respecting the Schools of Private Foundation as are deserving of Your Excellency's notice; and in the first place we have the satisfaction to state of the School of Middleton, that since the appointment in the month of May last of Mr. John Turpin to the Mastership thereof, the School has acquired a very high reputation, and has accordingly been very numerously attended both by day-scholars and boarders,
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and we have been enabled to appropriate a sum of £. 271. 4. 9. towards further improvements at this Establishment, by reason that the tenants of the School Lands, against whom proceedings by informations in Chancery, mentioned in our former Reports, are depending, to impeach the leases under which they derive, have consented to pay in their rents to the Board, without prejudice to the rights of the parties in the Chancery Cause. In respect of the proceedings in Chancery, we have been informed by our solicitors that various circumstances, over which they had no control, have since our last Report delayed the hearing of these information-causes, namely, the absence abroad of some of the parties to the informations, and the deaths of others, and the minority of the heir of one of the deceased parties; but we expect that they will be set down for hearing in the next Term.

Of the School of Navan, we beg leave to report that the School House and Establishment have been completed, and the contractor has been paid out of the funds of the School the full amount of his contract, viz. £. 2,562, and a further sum of £. 174. 4. 6. for certain additional works which in the progress of the building were found to be necessary.

NAVAN.
(Preston's Schools.)

This School being in its constitution an English or Mercantile Academy, with a classical assistant on the Establishment, this Board called on the Patrons to appoint persons qualified for the respective departments; and accordingly Mr. John Scott Baker has been appointed to the English department, to whom possession of the School House has been given some time since; and we expect in a very short time to hear of the formal appointment by the Patrons, Messrs. Preston and Favie, of a classical assistant, they having, as we are informed, agreed on the person to be appointed. The new School House being in its arrangements such as to sufficiently accommodate such an assistant, and thereby to render unnecessary a detached and separate residence for him, the Board has demised the house in the town of Navan, formerly used as a School House, and occupied by the Under Master of the School, to a yearly tenant, the circumstances connected with its title and tenure not in our opinion authorizing a grant for a longer term.

In respect of the School of Ballyroan, we beg leave to inform Your Excellency that the Lord Bishop of Ferns having undertaken to make the necessary inquiries respecting a plot of ground considered by some persons to be eligible for the site of a School House in the Town of Ballyroan, we wait his Lordship's Report in expectation that it may enable the Board to determine without any further delay whether it would be advisable to build on the ground in question, or to rebuild the School House on its present site, in case a more permanent interest therein can be obtained.

BALLYROAN.

Since the date of our last Report the funds of the Schools of Navan and Ballyroan have been considerably increased by a sum of £. 3,168. 5. 3. paid in by the Receiver appointed by the Court of Chancery to receive the rents of the School Estates, the questions respecting his accounts which had been raised in the Master's Office having been lately settled by an order made by the Court of Chancery, bearing date the 20th day of December last, which finally established the principle on which the balance against him should be ascertained to a given period. And we beg leave further to state, that the Governors of the Blue Coat Hospital, Dublin, being entitled to receive a portion of the sum so paid in by the Receiver, pursuant to the provisions of the said Act of the 53d Geo. III. we have directed our Solicitors to ascertain the amount of the share to which they

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are entitled thereof, in order that the same may be appropriated to their use; and we have also directed them to require the Receiver to pass his accounts of rents received by him from the time to which he had accounted, as above mentioned.

CLONMEL.

We have further to report to Your Excellency, that the School House at Clonmell has been completed in a very satisfactory manner, according to the reports of the Architect who was employed by the Board to superintend the works; and that it has been delivered up to the Master, whose School is in a very flourishing state, the Contractor having been paid the full amount of his contract, viz. £. 4,000 by loan from the Consolidated Fund, to be repaid by instalments at the rate of £. 6. per cent out of the revenues of this School, pursuant to the Acts of the 53d Geo. III. and 3d Geo. IV. c. 79.

Diocesan and District Schools.

ARMAGH and CONNOR.

We beg leave to advert in the next place to the state of the Diocesan and District Schools; and we have the satisfaction to report to Your Excellency that the School for the district, composed of the Dioceses of Armagh and Connor, is in good repute, and likely in a very short time to prove a most effective establishment. The School House, which was commenced since the date of our last Report, has been nearly completed, and the Master, whose appointment only took place last year, informs us by his Returns that there are at his School, which was opened in the large town of Ballymena, in a house hired by him at his own charge, a considerable number of day-scholars and some boarders.

LIMERICK, KILLALOE, and KILFENORA.

On the subject of the School for the Dioceses of Limerick, Killaloe, and Kilfenora, we beg leave to refer Your Excellency to the Report of the proceedings of the Commissioners made in April 1830 to the then Lord Lieutenant. The Committee of Gentlemen therein stated to have been appointed by the Grand Jury of the County of Limerick, made written communications to the Commissioners on the subject of certain matters, which they stated as essential to be ascertained before the Grand Jury would consent to permit the Treasurer of the County to pay over the sum presented for building the District School of Limerick, Killaloe, and Kilfenora. That sum, amounting to £. 1,292. 6. 2., has been for some years in the hands of the Treasurer of the County of Limerick, wholly unproductive to the County, or to the Charitable Establishment to which the presentments directed it to be applied, notwithstanding various applications were made on the part of the Commissioners, to the Treasurer first, and afterwards to the Grand Jurors, to have it lodged in the Bank of Ireland. The Commissioners answered the communications of the Committee in, as they consider, a candid and liberal manner, as will appear from the correspondence, copies of which we are ready to furnish to Your Excellency should it be your pleasure to require them. The demand of the Committee, after some explanations, appears to have nearly narrowed itself to a question of patronage, the Committee prescribing conditions on which alone the Grand Jury would permit the presentments made between 1816 and 1823 to take effect, that the Commissioners shall first formally guarantee to them the right of nominating from time to time, twelve free Scholars, to be taught gratis at the School, such Scholars to be there continued until prepared for the University, without being removable by the Master. The Commissioners in reply to the first communication of the Committee stated to the effect, that as the Act of Parliament by which the Board is constituted is silent on the question of patronage, and none being claimed by the Board, they would leave the question respecting the recommendation of Free Scholars to be arranged between the Grand Jury of the County, the Grand Jury of the City of Limerick, by whose presentments chiefly the site for a School House was purchased by the Commissioners,

sioners, and the Bishops of Killaloe and Limerick, who as well as their clergy annually contribute to the payment of the Master's salary of £.150 a year late currency; and had such arrangements taken place it would have been submitted by the Commissioners to the Lord Lieutenant for his consideration and sanction, the King being Patron of the School. We beg leave however to observe, that the original presentment by the Grand Jury of the County was unconditional, and that subsequent Grand Juries so considered it; and also appeared to consider that the Commissioners of Education being so empowered by law were to regulate and manage the School Establishment and its concerns, and even the plan for building the School House, although lately the Grand Jury of the County have claimed, through their Committee, an authority, not, as the Commissioners can discover, vested in them by any statute, which claim the Commissioners did not wish altogether to impugn, lest the funds should be lost to the Charity; on the contrary, they were ready to yield so far as was consistent with their duty. Under these circumstances the Commissioners, who on the faith of the presentments made by the County Grand Jury, and with funds in part derived from the citizens, and partly with money advanced on the credit of the Board, and still due to the lender, have actually, with the privity of the Grand Jury of the County, purchased a suitable site for the District School House, cannot but feel themselves considerably embarrassed, and we respectfully request Your Excellency to inquire into the matter, with a view to its ultimate arrangement; and we consider it in any event as agreeable to justice and equity that the Treasurer of the County should not be permitted to hold in his hands, interest free, the funds presented to be appropriated for the advancement of Education; and in relation to this subject we beg leave to refer Your Excellency to the suggestion respectfully submitted for Your Excellency's consideration at the close of this our Report.

We regret to be obliged to report to Your Excellency, that notwithstanding the charges given by the Judges at the different Assizes, the Grand Juries of many Counties in which School Establishments were by the warrants of the Commissioners, with the consent and approbation of the Lord Lieutenant, directed to be placed, have declined to grant assistance by presentment for the building of proper School Houses. And we more particularly allude to the Grand Juries of the Counties of Westmeath and Galway, to whom respectively Memorials have been from time to time presented by the Commissioners, stating according to the facts, that there were certain funds in Bank, in the names of the Commissioners, to the credit of the respective Schools, which, if moderately increased, would enable the Board to erect suitable School Houses in the Towns of Mullingar and Tuam; in the first for the District composed of the Dioceses of Meath and Ardlagh, (to which a Master, the Reverend Matthew Eaton, has been lately appointed by Your Excellency), and in the latter for the Diocese of Tuam, wherein a Master has also been appointed. The old Diocesan School House of Tuam had, before this Board was constituted, become greatly dilapidated, so much so as to be almost uninhabitable; and this Board having no means of causing it to be put into repair but by applications to the Grand Jury of the County of Galway to present a sum of money sufficient for that purpose, which failed of success, on consideration whereof, and the Master of the School being unable from his slender means to uphold the premises, even in the wretched state in which he found them, and their condition gradually becoming worse, the Commissioners necessarily caused the old School House to be sold, and had its produce invested in Government Stock, as part of the fund for building a new one, intended to be erected on a piece of ground lately granted for the

MEATH and

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TUAM.

purpose by his Grace the Archbishop of Tuam. On the subject of that old School House, and the causes which led to its dilapidation and almost ruinous state, the Commissioners presented a Memorial to the late Lord Lieutenant, the Duke of Northumberland, to which, and to his answer thereto, we take the liberty of drawing Your Excellency's attention; a claim for pecuniary aid through the Government towards building a new School, being considered as founded in justice, by reason that the School House had been during the vacancy of a Master appropriated to public uses in no way connected with Education. Finally, with respect to these Diocesan and District Schools in general, we beg leave to state, that in consequence of a misapprehension which appeared to exist concerning their constitution, the Commissioners caused circular letters to be written to the several Masters, informing and reminding them that these Schools are Free Schools, intended by the Legislature for the benefit of such persons resident in the respective Dioceses or Districts as might wish to procure for their children (of whatever religious persuasion) a Classical Education free of expense, and that, consequently, it was imperative on the Masters to receive day-scholars accordingly, not however precluding them from receiving voluntary remuneration from such parents as might think proper to give it.

We also take the liberty of submitting to Your Excellency's consideration, as we had done to that of his Grace the Duke of Northumberland, the propriety of appointing Masters to the vacant Diocesan and District Schools, subject to the condition of their teaching School in houses to be procured at their own expense, until School Houses shall be provided for them by the Commissioners. The Commissioners believe that the Masterships of all the Diocesan and District Schools at present vacant are of the patronage of the Crown, and therefore in the gift of Your Excellency.

The Commissioners have been most anxious, by all the means in their power, to carry into execution the intention of the Legislature in relation to the Establishment of Diocesan and District Schools in the several places in which they are to be kept, under the appointment of the Board, pursuant to the provision of the Act of Parliament hereinafter mentioned; they have, in some measure, contributed to the attainment of that most desirable object by being instrumental in procuring the building of suitable School Houses in a few of the Districts, as will appear from their Report, but they despair of being able to proceed much farther in that respect as the law at present stands. The 12th Elizabeth, chap. 1, had provided that there should be a Free School in every Diocese in the principal Shire Town thereof, and that the School House should be erected at the costs and charges of the whole Diocese, without respect of persons; the salaries of the Masters to be paid (as they still continue to be) by the Bishops and Clergy, in the proportions of one third by the former, and two thirds by the latter. By the 7th William 3rd, chap. 4, which demonstrates great anxiety for their Establishment, the Schools are to be public Latin Free Schools; and by the 12th Geo. 1, chap. 9, which was passed to remedy certain defects in the Act of Elizabeth, of which the mode pointed out for levying money for building School Houses was the chief, it was enacted that the Grand Juries of each County might present reasonable sums towards the building and repairing of the Schools to be levied on the whole County, or such part of it as should be in the particular Diocese in which the School was to be placed. The power of levying money by Presentment for such purposes was farther extended by the 29th Geo. 2, chap. 7, by providing that the levy should be made from the County at large. By the 53d Geo. 3, chap. 107, this Board was empowered, with the consent and approbation of the Lord Lieutenant, by warrant under hand and seal, to direct and declare

declare that any two or more Dioceses should be united into one District; and that the Free School of such two or more Dioceses should be consolidated into one Free School, to be kept in such place in the Diocese as might be so directed. The latter Act also purports to provide funds for the building of School Houses, by authorizing the Grand Jury of any County in which the Diocesan or District School, or site appointed for the same, shall be, to present on the County any sum or sums which they shall think proper for purchasing, providing, building or repairing any such School House, or a Dwelling House for the Master thereof, or for purchasing or procuring a site for the same, not exceeding two plantation acres. We have thought it right thus to refer Your Excellency to the different Acts of Parliament made in relation to these Schools, with the view of showing what was the continued intention of the Legislature respecting their Establishment, from which it will appear that it was evidently intended that the duty of providing for the purchase of the sites and building of these Schools was to be imposed on the Grand Juries; but we beg leave to observe that of the eighteen Dioceses or Districts in which Schools should be kept, eight only are provided with effective establishments, by reason of the disinclination on the part of Grand Juries to present any sum, however small, for the purposes above mentioned, and by reason of the unwillingness of Masters in general, even were it in their power, to produce sufficient funds from their own resources to aid in the building of School Houses, it not being considered that they could charge on their successors any part of such expenditure. Under these circumstances we beg leave to submit most respectfully to Your Excellency, that the object of the Legislature is seeking to provide for the due establishment of Diocesan and District Schools can be effectuated either by making it imperative on the Grand Juries to present sufficient sums to be raised on their Counties for the building, outfit, and repairs of the Schools, to be first approved of by the Lord Lieutenant, or by enabling the Commissioners to raise by loan to be made from the Consolidated Fund, or from such funds as may be appropriated by Parliament to be lent out for the encouragement of Education, or the improvement of Ireland, or such other public funds as may be applicable to the purpose, such sums as may be reasonably required for the building and outfit of these Schools; such loans when made to be repaid by Annual Instalments at £.5 per cent., or by such instalments as the Government may think proper; the instalments to be made a charge on the salary of the Masters and their successors until the whole amount of such loan shall be repaid to Government, so as to avoid any loss of principal to the Public; such a measure would afford the means of diffusing the benefit of liberal Education throughout Ireland to persons of every religious persuasion. And we beg leave to submit to Your Excellency, that whether it shall be made imperative on Grand Juries to make such Presentments, or whether the Law is to remain as at present, leaving it to their discretion whether they will present or not, it would appear proper that some enactment should be made to oblige the County Treasurers to lodge in the Bank of Ireland, to the credit of the Commissioners, or of the persons to whom such money is presented to be paid, all such sums as have been or shall be levied by virtue of such Presentments within a certain specified time after the same shall be received by the Treasurer.

In the last place we take the liberty of stating, that by reason of the constitution of this Board, which requires the presence and sanction of an *ex officio* Commissioner to every act of the Board, its proceedings have been retarded, and often considerably embarrassed. These *ex officio* Commissioners are the Lord Primate, the Lord Chancellor, the Archbishop of Dublin, the Archbishop of Cashel, the Archbishop of Tuam, the Lord Chief Justice of the Court of King's

Bench, the Provost of Trinity College, and the Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. The necessary absence from Dublin of some of the exofficio Commissioners, the official and paramount duties of others, the occasional illness of some, and other unavoidable circumstances, have often led to the necessity of postponing, not only the important, but even the most ordinary business of the Board, and the payment of the claims of Contractors and salaries of Masters and Usbers, and have frequently occasioned great inconvenience and loss of time to the ordinary Members of the Board, who have waited, often to no purpose, at the place of meeting, expecting the appearance of an Official Member; and we hope that Your Excellency will take this matter into your consideration, so that a remedy may be provided.

(A true Copy.)

Wm. C. Quin, Secretary.

Board of Education, 15th April 1831.

(Ireland.)

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